

His Excellency António Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
New York, NY

August 4, 2020

**Re: Extension of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement**

Dear Secretary-General,

We, the undersigned non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs), greatly appreciate your focus on internal displacement as demonstrated by your establishment of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement. The Panel has the potential to identify concrete recommendations to prevent and respond to internal displacement. Those recommendations will provide critical guidance to UN Member States and other stakeholders to develop solutions for internally displaced persons in all their diversity.

As NGOs and CSOs, we have engaged – and remain committed to engaging – with the Panel as it carries out its work. We are, however, concerned by the current uncertainty surrounding the timeline available for the Panel to complete its tasks. The Panel needs adequate time to hear directly from internally displaced persons, States affected by internal displacement, and other stakeholders. Such direct consultations are essential to craft relevant, practical, and credible recommendations that reflect their concerns. Given the myriad challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented, the Panel clearly needs more time to proceed with its plans.

We urge you to take a decision now to extend the Panel's timeframe by the requested seven months. A timely decision will allow the Panel and others – including the signatories of this letter – to continue essential consultations and find other ways of feeding into the Panel's deliberations, findings, and recommendations. Staying with the original timeline will result in half-efforts and an end product of reduced quality and impact—which would represent a significant missed opportunity.

We understand the hesitation to commit to an extension without the requisite funds. Our view is that if you announce the Panel's extension, the demonstration of your firm commitment to enable the Panel to complete its work will encourage Member States to provide the necessary resources. Many of us have been actively advocating with donor States to offer funding to cover these costs.

The promise of the High-Level Panel process is in jeopardy due to circumstances beyond its control. Its work is too important to be rushed. Adequate time is required for the formulation of bold and concrete recommendations on internal displacement, particularly at a time when COVID-19 is affecting so many, including internally displaced persons.

We thank you, in advance, for considering a positive and timely decision to extend the Panel's timeframe to enable better prevention, responses, and solutions to internal displacement. We assure you that we continue to stand ready, as an NGO and CSO community, to assist the work of the Panel energetically and constructively.

Sincerely yours,

ACT Alliance  
 Act for Peace  
 Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network  
 Cameroon Humanitarian Women Network  
 CARE International  
 ChristianAid  
 Community Association for Vulnerable Persons  
 Community Education For Life  
 Danish Refugee Council - DRC  
 FM4 Paso Libre, Dignidad y Justicia en el Camino A.C.  
 Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights  
 Good Neighbors International  
 HIAS  
 InterAction  
 International Catholic Migration Commission  
 International Council of Voluntary Agencies

International Rescue Committee  
 INTERSOS  
 Jesuit Refugee Service  
 Mercy Corps  
 Naripokkho  
 North West Association of Women with Disabilities  
 Norwegian Refugee Council  
 Oxfam International  
 Plan International  
 Refugees International  
 Save the Children  
 The Lutheran World Federation  
 Translators without Borders  
 Women's Refugee Commission  
 World Vision



Cc: Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator